

The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY
THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—James Freeman Clarke.

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THE PRESENT CRISIS.

When a deed is done for Freedom, through
the broad earth's aching breast
Runs a thrill of joy prophetic, trembling on
from east to west,
And the slave, where'er he cowers, feels the
soul within him climb
To the awful verge of manhood, as the energy
sublime
Of a century bursts full-blossomed on the
thorny stem of Time.

Through the walls of hut and palace shoots
the instantaneous throe,
When the travail of the Ages wrings earth's
systems to and fro;
At the birth of each new Era, with a recog-
nizing start,
Nation wildly looks at nation, standing with
mute lips apart,
And glad Truth's yet mightier man-child
leaps beneath the Future's heart.

So the Evil's triumph sendeth, with a terror
and a chill,
Under continent to continent, the sense of
coming ill,
And the slave, where'er he cowers, feels his
sympathies with God

In hot tear-drops ebbing earthward, to be
drunk up by the sod,
Till a corpse crawls round unburied, delving
in the nobler clod.

For mankind are one in spirit, and an instinct
bears along,
Round the earth's electric circle, the swift
flash of right or wrong;
Whether conscious or unconscious, yet Hu-
manity's vast frame
Through its ocean-sundered fibres feels the
gush of joy or shame;—
In the gain or loss of one race all the rest have
equal claim.

Once to every man and nation comes the mo-
ment to decide,
In the strife of Truth with Falsehood, for the
good or evil side;
Some great cause, God's new Messiah, offer-
ing each the bloom or blight,
Parts the goats upon the left hand, and the
sheep upon the right,
And the choice goes by forever 'twixt that
darkness and that light.

Hast thou chosen, O my people, on whose
party thou shalt stand,
Ere the Doom from its worn sandals shakes
the dust against our land?
Though the cause of Evil prosper, yet 'tis
Truth alone is strong,
And, albeit she wander outcast now, I see
around her throng
Troops of beautiful, tall angels, to enshield
her from all wrong.

Backward look across the ages and the beacon-
moments see,
That, like peaks of some sunk continent, jut
through Oblivion's sea;
Not an ear in court or market for the low
foreboding cry
Of those Crises, God's stern winnowers, from
whose feet earth's chaff must fly;
Never shows the choice momentous till the
judgment hath passed by.

Careless seems the great Avenger; history's
pages but record
One death-grapple in the darkness 'twixt old
systems and the Word;
Truth forever on the scaffold, Wrong forever
on the throne—
Yet that scaffold sways the Future, and, be-
hind the dim unknown,
Standeth God within the shadow, keeping
watch above his own.

We see dimly in the Present what is small and what is great,
 Slow of faith, how weak an arm may turn the iron helm of Fate:
 But the soul is still oracular; amid the market's din,
 List the ominous stern whisper from the Delphic cave within—
 "They enslave their children's children who make compromise with sin."

Then to side with Truth is noble when we share her wretched crust,
 Ere her cause bring fame and profit, and 'tis prosperous to be just;
 Then it is the brave man chooses, while the coward stands aside,
 Doubting in his abject spirit, till his Lord is crucified,
 And the multitude make virtue of the faith they had denied.

Count me o'er earth's chosen heroes—they were souls that stood alone,
 While the men they agonized for hurled the contumelious stone,
 Stood serene, and down the future saw the golden beam incline
 To the side of perfect justice, mastered by their faith divine,
 By one man's plain truth to manhood and to God's supreme design.

By the light of burning heretics Christ's bleeding feet I track,
 Toiling up new Calvaries ever with the cross that turns not back,
 And these mounds of anguish number how each generation learned
 One new word of that grand *Credo* which in prophet-hearts hath burned
 Since the first man stood God-conquered with his face to heaven upturned.

For Humanity sweeps onward; where to-day the martyr stands,
 On the morrow crouches Judas with the silver in his hands;
 Far in front the cross stands ready and the crackling fagots burn,
 While the hooting mob of yesterday in silent awe return
 To glean up the scattered ashes into History's golden urn.

'Tis as easy to be heroes as to sit the idle slaves
 Of a legendary virtue carved upon our fathers' graves,
 Worshipers of light ancestral make the present light a crime;—
 Was the Mayflower launched by cowards, steered by men behind their time?
 Turn those tracks toward Past or Future, that make Plymouth rock sublime?

They were men of present valor, stalwart old iconoclasts,
 Unconvinced by axe or gibbet that all virtue was the Past's;

But we make their truth our falsehood, thinking that hath made us free,
 Hoarding it in mouldy parchments, while our tender spirits flee
 The rude grasp of that great Impulse which drove them across the sea.

They have rights who dare maintain them; we are traitors to our sires,
 Smothering in their holy ashes Freedom's new-lit altar-fires;
 Shall we make their creed our jailer? Shall we, in our haste to slay,
 From the tombs of the old prophets steal the funeral lamps away
 To light up the martyr-fagots round the prophets of to-day?

New occasions teach new duties; Time makes ancient good uncouth;
 They must upward still, and onward, who would keep abreast of Truth;
 Lo, before us gleam her camp-fires! we ourselves must Pilgrims be,
 Launch our Mayflower, and steer boldly through the desperate winter sea,
 Nor attempt the Future's portal with the Past's blood-rusted key.

—James Russell Lowell.

THE NEAREST DUTY.

"Whatsoever thy hand finds to do, do it with thy might."

"Do the duty which lies nearest to thee!" So said Carlyle, following Goethe. When he said it, years ago, it seemed to many of us like a new revelation, an eleventh commandment—come to make many things clear that before were dark and vague enough.

And, certainly, it is a very important maxim. It is a good thing for us all to be fastened to a chain of daily duties; not to have to decide afresh, at every moment, what to do, but to have the hour decide for us when it comes. This chain of duties, which we often complain of so much, and wish to be emancipated from, keeps mind and body in health and peace. The man and woman may be accounted happy who have regular work to do, to which each hour of the day invites them; work which is useful to others and themselves; work not involving anxiety, but, rather, relieving it. We are not anxious when we are at work, but when we are not at work. To have something to do for a sick friend takes away a little of the burden of anxiety concerning him.

This chain of daily habit, therefore is a most excellent gift to us all. No one can dispense with it. To have to get up in the

morning at a fixed hour; to dress; to breakfast; to be needed and expected in certain places during a good part of the day; and, besides the work, to have some regular study, some regular reading, some special pursuit—scientific, artistic, philanthropic, social; this regular course of events in our lives helps us along, prevents stagnation, keeps away the fiend of uncertainty and indecision which harries the life of the unoccupied person, who, because he can do what he pleases, is very apt not to be pleased with doing anything.

We often complain of these conventional and common duties; but much mental, moral and physical health comes out of them. The first demand we make on work is that it shall be regular, not spasmodic; habitual, not occasional; something which does not require new efforts of will, but which we are led to do by the expectations of others, the requirements of circumstances, the conventions of society, the tacit understanding which people have with each other not to leave the highway of custom except for some good reason.

The nearest duties, then, are, first, the regular and customary duties of our life. This makes the rule; but there are exceptions to every rule, and important exceptions to this.

While we ought, all of us, to *begin* with the duties which come to us, and are laid upon us by circumstances and the recurrent necessities of life, it does not follow that we are to *remain* there always.

The nearest duty may take another form, and become that nearest to our ability, that which we are the most fit to do. The nearest duty may be that "which our hand *finds* to do," not that which is found for it. To find anything, usually implies some independent looking, not mere passive reception. A duty which finds us may not be that which we find, and so *not* the nearest.

The customary routine of life is an excellent support, a good thing to lean upon; but we must not be enslaved by it. No one can dispense with routine, but we must sometimes rise above it.

The danger in this maxim is that it may lead to narrowness, keeping us in a little rut where we only plod along, caring for no one outside of our own small circle, taking no interest in the concerns of humanity around us. How many families there are in Boston, to-day, who do nothing, from January to December, for any persons outside of themselves! Yet they are doing with their might what their hand finds to do—only it all concerns themselves, their own children,

their own kindred, their own friends. They are very respectable, very worthy people, but profoundly indifferent to all that concerns the happiness of others, here or hereafter, who do not belong to their own little circle.

Now, if Christianity consists in following Christ and imitating him, it is evident that such as these are not Christians. They may be very good people, but their goodness is not Christian goodness, for Christ "went about doing good," and they do no good, except at home. Christ tells us to love our neighbors as ourselves, and in the parable of the Good Samaritan he teaches us that our neighbor is every man who needs our help, and whom we are able to aid.

When the Samaritan saw the wounded man lying by the wayside, he might have thought his nearest duty was to himself and to his own family; that the robbers might return, and, if he stopped to help the Jew, he might lose his own life. "My nearest duty is to get home as soon as I can," so he might have said; "I ought to take care of myself, and not risk my life for this Jew, who is one of the enemies of my people." But he did not reason this way. He believed it his nearest duty to help every one he was able to assist, whoever it might be; and he counted this stranger, though of another race, and of an alien religion, as his neighbor.

There are times when our nearest duty is not to ourselves, nor to our family; times when we must, like Abraham, go out from our own city and country. The nearest duty of some persons may be to serve as missionaries to the Chinese or the Hindoos; the nearest duty of others, to visit the prisoners, or to console the sufferers not of their own house or kindred. No one lives to himself, and no one dies to himself. The great power by which Christianity redeems the world is by making us see that our neighbor is the suffering man, the needing man, though as far off as degrees of latitude and longitude can place him.

When a young girl, a peasant and shepherdess on the eastern frontier of France, left her quiet fields, her silly sheep, her humble daily avocation, to encounter the dangers of war in order to lead the armies of her prince to victory, that was *her* nearest duty. When, four centuries later, a young man, a student in Paris, determined to go to India to find the scriptures of a dead religion, and translate them, that was *his* nearest duty. The nearest duty of Socrates was to spend his life in showing pretenders to knowledge how ignorant they really were.

The nearest duty of Linneus was to study the flora of the world. The inventor leaves his routine of work, and spends days, months, years, in baffled efforts to put into visible form some idea of his brain. If he succeeds, at last, men admit that this was his nearest duty. Others besides Socrates have their demon, who tells them to scorn delights and live laborious days in doing what seems, at the time, folly to those around them.

The nearest duty, then, may be that which is not nearest in space or time, but that which is nearest to the heart and soul. When the woman in the Scripture left her domestic duties, and took her alabaster box of ointment, and went to anoint the feet of Jesus, that was her nearest duty. When Dr. Howe left his land to go and fight for Greece, that was his nearest duty. When Florence Nightingale left her happy home in England to nurse soldiers in the Crimea, that was her nearest duty. The demon in the soul, the divine voice within, calls us to our work; the new occasions teach new duties, and so the prophet goes to his mission—goes, perhaps, reluctantly, in the heat and bitterness of his spirit, but the hand of the Lord is on him, and he is obliged to go.

Most of us are not called to be prophets or missionaries, martyrs to the truth, or leaders in a forlorn hope. But we are all of us called to take an interest in something outside of our own private business and family affairs. Charity begins at home, but, if it ends at home, it is not charity, but selfishness.

How many noble enterprises there are in this community to which men and women are devoting time, thought, strength, heart, life, and only ask of us a little sympathy and a little aid! Some labor for the poor; some for the children who have no homes nor friends; some for those who have fallen into temptation, but are not depraved; some for the poor animals, mute sufferers, unable to complain of their wrongs; some for neglected infants; some for aged people left alone in the world; some for young men, thrown amid the risks of a great city. All they ask of us is to help them in their work, give them a little sympathy, a little aid; but how many of us think it rather an impertinence in them to ask, and believe that on the whole, we are not our brother's keeper! "No! we must attend to nearer duties. We have bought five yoke of oxen and must go to prove them. We have built a house, and are rather short of means this year to help your society. We have had a great many calls lately, and have relatives who depend upon us. We doubt the use

of these philanthropies; would it not be better to do it in some other way? If these people are helped now, they will have to be helped again; there is no end to it." A man whom I once asked to contribute to missionary work told me he thought that until people asked for truth it did no good to send it. I told him it seemed to me fortunate for us that Christ and his apostles did not agree with him in this opinion. Another man used to say that he did not like to interfere between Providence and the man who was suffering in consequence of his own faults or defects. I asked him if my coming to him might not possibly be a call of Providence, also. But those who argue in this way are great advocates for doing the nearest duty, and for doing nothing else.

But the Lord never meant that we should make of our immediate and daily work prison walls to shut ourselves in, so as to take no part in the vast interests of humanity. Every man stands under an arch of heaven, infinite in extent, with the constellations of the universe lighting their solemn fires above him every night, and the unwearied sun marching over his head every day. Once in every twenty-four hours the earth carries us wholly round so as to face the entire universe. We all belong to the whole of God's world, and nothing which concerns it ought to find us indifferent. When we walk in the woods, the sweet breath of the ferns takes us back to past geologic ages; the fragrant breath of the firs and pines recall the Psalms of David and the Hymns of the Vedas. "Over us soars the eternal sky, full of light and of Deity." It is not meant that we should live to ourselves, but we are all called on to live for every truth, every human interest, every human need, as the Lord sends them to us or sends us to them.

Then the nearest duty may sometimes be to ourselves, to make ourselves fit and able to be of use to others.

Before the mechanic begins his work, no matter how important it is, his first duty is to sharpen his tools and put them in order. So it may be our first duty to put our body and mind in order before we begin any other duty, however necessary. I once was on a northwest Wisconsin, taking my summer vacation with my brothers on a great wheat farm. Coming away, I passed a Sunday in a little town on the upper Mississippi and went to a Presbyterian church. The minister preached on "Recreation," and said that he had known cases of men who came to him gloomy and anxious about their souls and he found the difficulty was not in the

souls, but their bodies, and so, instead of telling them to read the Bible, he advised them to take exercise and recreation. That was their nearest duty—to put their body in order, and then they could attend to their souls.

My Presbyterian minister was a wise man. But sometimes it is the soul which needs to be put in order before we can do any duty as we ought. If the soul is sick, we shall put no heart into anything we do. To finish any work well, we must have faith, courage, confidence, and be able to put our heart into it. But if the heart is cold and dead, we shall do everything in a cold and dead way. The nearest duty, therefore, may be to let alone all other duties, and to take care of our mind, our heart and our soul. To come into the presence of God, to give ourselves up to him, to begin a new life of obedience, faith, submission, patience, hope, this may be our nearest duty.

If a mechanic must get his tools in order before he can work well, much more must the delicate and subtle organs of the soul be put in right condition before anything else can be well done. For this purpose, we must sometimes leave, for a time, routine and the narrow rut of life, to refresh and quicken the soul to new life and power.

It is often assumed that the sphere of woman is home, and home only. She is to stay at home and attend to housekeeping and the dinner—the care of the children, and oversight of the domestic work. But to do these well, she ought to do something more than these. Man shall go forth to his work and labor until the evening, seeing a variety of people, hearing many new things, bathing in the current of life. But woman needs refreshment, too. If man needs his club, why should not she have hers?

In a rude society women did all the indoor work, and man the outdoor work. She was the cook, and nurse, and the tailor—he the hunter, the woodman and laborer out of doors. Now, he delegates to others the digging, hunting, ploughing, and becomes physician, editor, merchant, mechanic or minister. If she has the ability for it, why should she not do the same? At all events, to keep house well, she must have the stimulus of other occupations to sharpen the delicate tools of thought and feeling with which both men and women work.

The highest work that we can do is that which we ought to do, because there are fewer able to do this higher sort of work than the lower. If a man or a woman can do primary work, they ought not to do

secondary. A good mechanic ought not to spend his time in breaking stones on the road if he can get work to do in his own trade. A man or a woman who is able to teach, or to practise medicine, or to practise law, or to preach, or is skilful in any art, should not do mere manual labor, but let others do that for him. I do not see why this law does not apply to women just as much as to men. The tools to those who can use them. The highest work we can do well, and have an opportunity of doing—that is the nearest duty. Whatever thy hand finds to do, do it with thy might. Work done in a half-and-half way—in a slovenly, inefficient way—is a wretched business. How much work is done in that way! How little thoroughly good work is done! The great artist told his pupils to mix their colors with brains. The reason of so much poor work is that so little thought is put into it. It is mere routine. General culture is necessary to do anything well. I mean that anything which makes the mind active, free, large, vigorous, helps us to do well the smallest matters. Give your children all the education you can, no matter what they are to be. No real knowledge, no real thinking, ever comes amiss. It helps us to do things with all our might, and that is the only way to do them well.

A thing not done with our might is not worth doing at all. Slovenly work is bad for the doer and the thing done. But to do things with our might, we must have might to do them with. Therefore we must cultivate might. And to do things mightily, we must do them thoughtfully, do them heartily, and do them prayerfully. Thought, heart, and prayer feed the roots of the soul, and give it strength. Thought put into work makes it interesting, turns it into art, gives to it the joy of accomplishment. We can work heartily when we see the meaning of our work, the value of it, the good of it. When we do our work not for ourselves only, selfishly, but for others also, then we do it cheerfully and happily. But to do work with our might we should do it prayerfully. I do not mean that we should say formal prayers over it. But to have the conviction that God is with us—that we are working for him when we work for ourselves or others—and so to keep the channel of communication open upward, for inspiration to come to us—this gives great might and efficiency to work. Usually men have sought this divine inspiration only for what is called religious work, and have supposed that it came by some miraculous answer or special intervention. But we need inspiration just

as much for the commonest duties of life as for preaching the gospel. To have the right spirit in our common talk we need some inspiration—to have the right spirit in our daily dealings with our fellow-men we need it. We need this spirit in the parlor, the kitchen and the shop just as much as in the church—and we can have it in all of them. For just as the river flows and flows unceasingly, when there is an open channel, so the spirit of God flows into human hearts by a continuous unending current, when we have the channel open. Trust in God and a desire to do what is right—this makes the channel from the soul up to heaven. But, at all events, let us all do something, and do it with our might. Let us not think any honest work degrading. The lowest work done in a good spirit elevates us—the highest work done in a bad spirit degrades us. I call the preacher's work degrading when he preaches from vanity, or without truth and love in his words. I call the work of a President or a member of Congress degrading, when either of them is the slave of a party. If one is eloquent as an angel, and has no love in his voice, the sound is as hollow as that of a drum, and he degrades himself by his speech. A man may be a popular poet or novelist—and his books reach twenty editions—but if he panders to low appetites, prejudices and passions, his work is degrading. But let one sweep a room for the love of God, or cook a dinner for the love of man, then his work is heavenly work, and raises him towards God.

"From scheme and creed the light goes out—
The saintly fact survives;
The blessed Master none can doubt,
Revealed in saintly lives."

—James Freeman Clarke.

THE STILL HOUR.

So long this faith to some ideal Good,
Under whatever mortal names it masks,
Freedom, Law, Country, this ethereal mood
That thanks the Fates for their severer tasks,
Feeling its challenged pulses leap,
While others skulk in subterfuges cheap,
And, set in Danger's van, has all the boon it
asks,
Shall win man's praise and woman's love,
Shall be a wisdom that we set above
All other skills and gifts to cultivate dear,
A virtue round whose forehead we inwreath
Laurels that with a living passion breathe
When other crowns grow, while we twine
them, sear.

—James Russell Lowell.

The years teach much which the days never know.—Emerson.

Live for something. Do good and leave behind you a monument of virtue that the storm of time can never destroy. Write your name in kindness, love, and mercy on the hearts of thousands you come in contact with, year by year: you will never be forgotten. Your name, your deeds, will be as legible on the hearts you leave behind, as the stars on the brow of evening. Good deeds will shine as the stars of heaven.—Chalmers.

"A day of noble activity.—God help you to do your best in it."

All of us who are sorry for our sins are brothers and sisters.—George MacDonald.

Not till the soul acts with all its strength, strains its every faculty, does prayer begin.—Frances P. Cobbe.

The true proof of the inherent nobleness of our common nature is in the sympathy it betrays with what is noble wherever crowds are collected.—Bulwer.

The true Church is society informed by the spirit of God. True religion is the health of the spirit, manifest in healthy and beneficent action.—F. Hedge.

In people that are grievous both to others and to themselves, the *body* may often appear ruling the soul, because such people are poor creatures, and false to nature.—Aristotle.

"Simple souls have easy ways to salvation."
"Nothing is small or great of itself: it becomes so by the spirit we put into it." "There is no peace for the man who makes his starting-point from himself."—Selected.

The root of the divine life is faith. The chief branches are love of God, charity to man, purity and humility. These are the highest perfections that either men or angels are capable of, the *very foundation of heaven laid in the soul*.—Scougal.

Call unto Me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not.—Jer. xxxiii. 3.

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB.

Send all offers and requests for this department to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 25 Fairmount Way, Quincy, Mass.

Please remember, when you see a request for a book in the Book Club, to write a card to Mrs. Nichols, asking "Shall I send such a book to such a person?" before sending it, else the person who requests it may receive several copies. When any one writes directly to you, asking for a book offered by you, send a card to Mrs. Nichols, saying that you have sent it. When you receive more requests than you can meet, send these to the Book Club to be printed here.

OFFERS.

Miss L. Freeman Clarke, 5 Brimmer Street, Boston, Mass., offers these books: "Self-Culture," "Nineteenth Century Questions," and "Life and Times of Jesus," all by James Freeman Clarke; ministers and libraries to have the first choice. Also the following leaflets by the same author will be sent to any one upon request: "Do Not Be Discouraged"; "Anarchy and Law"; "The Lessons of the American Civil War."

REQUESTS.

1. *Ladies' Home Journal* is asked for by Mrs. L. J. Hillman, Esmont, Virginia; Mrs. N. A. Coleman, Amherst, Virginia; Mrs. Odessa Wright, Dodson, Virginia; and Mrs. T. S. Beard, Phoenix, Virginia, Box 25.

2. *Dumb Animals, Beacon, and Youth's Companion* are wanted by Miss Jennie Tatum, Tatum, Virginia.

3. Miss Violet Cairns, 204 Washington St., Portage, Wisconsin, asks for *Youth's Companion* or *Good Housekeeping*.

4. *The Metropolitan* is asked for by Mrs. Cora A. Hoskinson, Three Rivers, Michigan.

5. *The Designer* or *Good Housekeeping* is asked for by Mrs. E. R. Abbitt, Appomattox, Virginia.

6. Mrs. Katie Hale, Roxbury, Ohio, will be glad of *Ladies' World* or *Youth's Companion*.

7. Miss Emma Irons, Epperson, Tennessee, eighteen years of age, with three sisters and a brother younger, asks for suitable reading.

8. *Munsey* or *Ladies' Home Journal* will be appreciated by Mrs. Arsenath Murphy, Chesterhill, Ohio.

9. It is a long time since I wrote to *The Cheerful Letter* and I thank all who used to send me reading matter. I have changed my address from Iron Bridge to R. R. 1,

Dayton, Ontario. I should be glad to get *The Youth's Companion* for my boy, and "The Worn Doorstep" and "Mr. Britling Takes Notice," and should very much like to get "Tom Sawyer," "Huckleberry Finn," or any other of Mark Twain's books. I will pass them on when read. Address Mr. S. C. Gardiner, Dayton, Ontario, Canada.

10. *Youth's Companion* is asked for by Mrs. J. E. Coffey, Sandidges, Virginia.

11. Mrs. Annie M. Corson, West Levant, Maine, R. F. D. 2, has a lonesome life and will be glad of reading.

12. I write to thank all for the help I have received and to say I appreciate it so much. I have changed my address from Athens, Tennessee, R. F. D. 1, to Dayton, Tennessee, R. F. D. 4, Box 73. Please publish this change in *The Cheerful Letter*, as it seems I cannot hear from any of the friends any more. I should like to receive letters and cards, also *Pictorial Review* or *Ladies' Home Journal*. I should also like to receive any of Harold Bell Wright's books, especially "When a Man's a Man" and "The Shepherd of the Hills." Address Miss Bettie Vaughan, R. D. 4, Box 73, Dayton, Tennessee.

13. I should be very glad to get some religious books to read to pass the lonely hours. Address Mrs. Ella J. Nolan, Endicott, Virginia.

14. I should be pleased to get some good books and magazines to read and I should especially like *The Delineator* and *The Ladies' Home Journal*. Some good friend sent me a few copies of *American Motherhood* some time ago; they were printed in 1911. They were the first I had ever read, and I thought they were fine. I certainly should like to read some of the new numbers. Address Mrs. H. C. Lackey, Dodson, Virginia, R. F. D. 1.

15. Will you please publish my sincere thanks to my *Cheerful Letter* friends for the valuable reading they have sent me for the last year? I should like to receive *The Woman's Home Companion* for 1917, also patchwork pieces of silk and velvet. Address Edith W. Derndon, Granite Springs, Virginia.

16. I shall be glad to correspond with some one of the *Cheerful Letter* circle and to receive reading for my children, nine in number. Address Mrs. M. J. Hartsell, Oakboro, North Carolina.

17. I am a Congregational minister. Any books or pamphlet literature your society

may have to distribute would be appreciated by me. I wish you would hold my name for such use. I enjoy so much Unitarian literature. Address Rev. Irving K. Merchant, 625 E. Vine Avenue, Knoxville, Tennessee.

18. Mrs. Will Dickinson, Fredericksburg, Route 2, Virginia, living among strangers, will appreciate good reading, and pictures for her little two-year-old girl.

19. Miss Mitford Quisenberry, Marion, Virginia, will be glad of up-to-date papers or magazines containing war news, pictures, etc., and a Red Cross magazine.

20. I want to thank all the *Cheerful Letter* friends who have remembered me in any way. I appreciate their kindness so much. It is impossible for me to write to each one separately. My husband has been very ill with the grip and then I had it. I do not seem to get over it. Am very weak and unable to do anything to speak of. I am never strong, and while my husband was ill it was a great strain on me; but we have so much to be thankful for that we are still spared to each other. I have been shut in all winter; now I hope to get out some after it gets warmer. I should like so much to have the *Youth's Companion*, regularly. The lady who has so kindly sent it to me for several years is unable to send it any longer. I miss it so much. I have this year's numbers up to January eighteenth. Mrs. Hartley James, New Gloucester, Maine.

21. I am teaching in a country public school. I should be so glad if some one would send me *The Geographic Magazine*. It would be of the greatest benefit and interest to the children. I should be glad to have either the old numbers or the current issues of the magazine. Address Miss Sarah Robertson, Amherst, Virginia.

22. The *Geographic* is asked for by Mrs. J. B. Alley, Germantown, North Carolina.

23. Miss Helen Alden, Keen's Mills, Maine, will be grateful for *The Cheerful Letter* and reading.

24. Mrs. Mae Berry, Forestburg, Texas, asks for *The Cheerful Letter* and reading.

25. Mrs. N. M. Carter, King's Creek, North Carolina, owing to ill health the past four years, has been unable to write to her correspondent and has had no reading sent to her. She will be glad of *The Cheerful Letter* and any current magazine.

26. I thank all friends who have sent me books. I have enjoyed and passed them on to others. I should be very glad to have a copy of some recent history of education, also of a work on entomology giving instruction for mounting moths and butterflies, etc. Address Miss Mamie Taylor, R. 2, Box 35, Green Bay, Virginia.

27. Mrs. George Laurence, Sandy Ridge, North Carolina, writes: It has been several years since I corresponded with any of the *Cheerful Letter* friends. I should like to receive literature for myself, also picture books for my little girl aged six, who has been an invalid since January.

28. Mr. B. W. Johnson, Bristol, South Dakota, will be glad of good magazines.

29. Thank you all for the nice things you sent me at Christmas for our tree. I tried to write to all that sent addresses, but had so much sickness right after Christmas I found I could not do it. A niece of mine died and left four little children and I have had to look after them; have had measles in my family, too. I hope my friends will not think me ungrateful. I do appreciate the kindness shown me by you all. It does look as if there is nothing but trouble in this world. What we are all to do I cannot see; all we can do is hope and pray for peace and better times. Please do not forget us; we shall be glad to have any reading you can spare. My daughter would like so much to have *The National Geographic Magazine* to use in her teaching. One of my friends sent me some old numbers at Christmas and we were so glad to have them. Address Mrs. J. Porter, Doerun, Georgia, R. F. D. 3, Colquitt County.

30. Will you have printed in *The Cheerful Letter* a request for the Cambridge edition of the Encyclopaedia Britannica,—India-paper edition? I am able to pay second-hand price for it, but not to buy a new set. Address Charles W. Lockenour, Pekin, Indiana.

31. July, August, and September, 1916, numbers of *Good Housekeeping* are asked for by Mrs. A. C. Bradshaw, Kerr, North Carolina.

32. Lillie Washington, Endicott, Virginia, will be very glad of a Bible.

33. I should be very glad to receive any kind of good reading matter, especially *Christian Herald* and *Ladies' Home Journal*.

Should also like a correspondent and will answer all letters as far as I am able to pay postage. We are poor people and have had a hard time this winter with measles in our family. I have never fully recovered; have a bad cough and am very weak. I have six children, four boys and two girls. Our oldest girl has a free scholarship in the Ferrum Training School and is working very hard for an education. Address Mrs. Kate Merritt, Critz, Virginia.

34. I have never written to the Cheerful Letter Book Club before and now write to ask you to please send me some reading. I am a widow and spend much of my time alone. If you could spare me some religious reading it would help pass the long days. Will some one please send me some patch-work pieces? I surely would appreciate them. I send for reference Mrs. Albert Owen, Sandy Level, Virginia. Address Mrs. Cornelia E. Dorr, Sandy Level, Virginia.

35. I should be so glad to get anything to read, also any kind of scraps for patch-work. I live in the country and have one little girl nearly two years old. We are renters on a small farm and we cannot afford to buy much to read. I should be glad to correspond with some *Cheerful Letter* friend. For reference apply to Rev. John Harris, Oakboro, North Carolina. Address Mrs. B. A. Thomas, Polkton, R. F. D. 3, North Carolina.

36. Florence Thornton, Pera, Virginia, asks for *Youth's Companion*. She has four sisters and a brother to enjoy any reading.

37. Mrs. B. A. Witt, Epperson, Tennessee, asks for reading for herself and husband. She especially wishes *Needlecraft*.

38. Eleanor L. Bailey, Waugh P.O., Virginia, asks for "Uncle Tom's Cabin," "The Eyes of the World," and "Freckles."

THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL.

JACOB ABBOTT'S METHOD OF DEALING WITH THE QUESTION.

(Continued from last number.)

That evening, at tea, Mr. Grant asked Jasper how he got along with his work during the afternoon with Martin.

"I got along with my work pretty well," said Jasper, "but I could not do anything at all with Martin."

"Why, what was the matter?" asked Mr. Grant.

"He would not mind me," replied Jasper. "He would not do as I said."

"That's extraordinary," said Mr. Grant.

"And at last," continued Jasper, "he went off and left me."

"Why did he go off and leave you?" asked Mr. Grant.

"Because he was not willing to do what I wanted him to do," said Jasper. "I wanted him to cut off some roots, and he would not, and so he came off and left me to finish the work alone."

"Is that a full and fair account of the matter?" interrogated Mr. Grant.

"Why, yes, grandfather," said Jasper. "I could tell you more of what we said and did, but that's the substance of it. He would not do what I wanted him to do, and so he came away."

"It is very extraordinary," said Mr. Grant, "for I expressly ordered him to work under your direction."

"Well, he would not," said Jasper.

Here there was a pause. Mr. Grant waited for a moment to see if Jasper would make any farther explanations, but he did not, and so Mr. Grant resumed:—

"It seems that some difficulty arose between you and Martin," said he, "and I have no doubt that if Martin himself were here, he could tell me in five words what it was; but he is not here, and I do not like to send for him, for that will look as if I could not trust *you* to give me a fair account of the matter. But I *can* trust you, I am sure. Think how ungenerous it would be in you to take advantage of his absence to give me a wrong idea of what he did—to make charges against him that are not really deserved—when he is not here to defend himself."

On hearing these words, Jasper resolved to be honest, and to tell his grandfather the whole story in a fair and impartial manner; so he began at the beginning, and went on to the end, and gave his grandfather a full account of all that had happened. He explained how he had at first made Martin discontented by ordering him about from one place to another, giving him every minute a new piece of work to do before he had finished the other, and then that he had directed him to cut the roots of the tree, and that Martin had refused because he thought it would dull the axe.

"So, then, that was the reason that he would not obey you?" said Mr. Grant. "He was afraid of spoiling one of my tools?"

"Yes, sir," said Jasper.

"And now, on reflection, do you think that was a good reason?"

"Why, I am not sure, grandfather," replied Jasper. "I think now that that was a good reason why I should not have ordered him to do it; but, if I ordered him to do it, I don't see why he ought not to have obeyed me. You put him under my orders, and if I ordered him wrong, then, it seems to me, he ought to have obeyed, and left me to be responsible for it to you."

"Good!" said Mr. Grant. "That is a true principle, and an excellent good one within its limits. What you mean is this: that when one person is under the rightful authority of another, he must obey the orders that he receives, even when they are wrong."

"Yes, sir," said Jasper.

"Well, that is a good and true principle, with one proviso; and that is, that the commander, in giving his orders, keeps within the limits of his authority. If he goes beyond the limits of his authority, then the other is not bound to obey."

"There are always limits to authority," continued Mr. Grant, "either express or implied. There are limits even to the authority of a captain or a general in war. If a captain orders a soldier to fire at the enemy, the soldier is bound to obey, because it is within the power of the captain to order the soldier to fire at the enemy whenever he pleases. The soldier must obey, even if he knows that it is the wrong time to fire."

"And what sort of a command would be *beyond* the limits of the captain's power?" asked Jasper.

"The captain might say to the soldier: 'The general is going to review the troops to-morrow. In doing it, he will pass down the line directly in front of you. Have your gun loaded with a bullet, and when he gets opposite you, shoot him. I, who am your captain, command you to do it, and you are bound to obey your captain in everything.'"

"He would not be bound to obey him in that," said Jasper.

"No," replied Mr. Grant; "to order a soldier to shoot his own general is something beyond a captain's authority. And it is just so with other kinds of authority, where the limits are not expressed—only implied."

"I don't know exactly what you mean by implied," said Jasper.

"Why, in your case," said Mr. Grant, "when I put Martin under your command for the afternoon, I did not tell you in express words how much authority you were to have over him, but left you to infer it by your own good sense from the nature of the case. I will not attempt now to define them

exactly, but I think you will see for yourself, on reflection, that I did not mean to authorize you to command him to spoil my tools, or to injure my property in any way."

"Yes, sir," replied Jasper, "I do see it now."

"Still," continued Mr. Grant, "I should not have thought that he would have come away and left you on that account. I don't see why he did not stay and help you in other ways. What was the real reason why he came away?"

"Why, I suppose," said Jasper, hesitating, "I suppose he thought I struck him."

"Ah," said Mr. Grant, "that throws new light on the subject. He thought you struck him."

"Yes, sir," replied Jasper; "but I did not mean to strike him exactly."

"How was it?" asked Mr. Grant. "Tell me all about it."

"Why, you see," replied Jasper, "I wanted to take the axe to cut the roots of the tree, and he would not let me. He held the axe behind him, and then put out his arm to keep me from taking it, and so I struck his arm."

"There was no great harm in that," said Mr. Grant; "still I think it was wrong."

"Yes, grandfather," said Jasper, "I think so myself now."

"It was not anything very bad," rejoined Mr. Grant. "For a *man* to strike his workman because he was angry with him would be very bad, but for a *boy* like you to do it on a sudden impulse is no great thing, provided he sees the wrong, after he has committed it, and makes reparation."

Perhaps Mr. Grant made too light of Jasper's offense in striking Martin, and yet it must be confessed that while we are young, and before we have learned the habit of self-control, the movement of the arm to resent any supposed injury or wrong, follows so exceedingly quick upon the emotion of resentment that the action is almost involuntary. It is, however, none the less really wrong.

It was, however, not Mr. Grant's way ever to exaggerate in any degree the faults or offenses of children. While he was very firm and decided in the measures which he adopted in the government of Jasper, he was always very indulgent in estimating his conduct, and was very ready to take into view, of his own accord, every possible excuse and palliation.

"I don't think it was anything very bad, your striking Martin as you did," he continued, "though it is not surprising that he was very much hurt in his feelings by it."

To be struck when you do not deserve it is something very hard to bear. I don't know that I blame him for going away. Do you?"

"Why, no, sir," said Jasper, "I don't think I do."

"Suppose," continued Mr. Grant, "that you had been working for somebody, and had been doing as well as you could for them, and that they should get out of patience with you, and come and strike you, would not you have gone off and left them?"

"Yes, sir, I would," said Jasper, firmly.

"Well, now, I think you will feel better," said Mr. Grant, "if you go and tell Martin so. Do just as you please about it. You see you naturally feel a little uncomfortable when you think of having struck Martin in that way, but if you go and tell him that you ought not to have done so, that will take all that uncomfortable feeling away. Besides, I should not wonder if it would not make Martin feel better about it too."

"I'll go and tell him this minute," said Jasper.

So he went out to find Martin, who was watering the horse at the pump in the yard.

"Martin," said Jasper, "I think you did exactly right to come off and leave me this afternoon. I would have done just so if I had been you. Besides I had no business to strike you."

"Well now, I have been thinking of it," said Martin, "and I rather thought I did not do quite right. You did not hurt me anyway.—From *"Congo."*

(Concluded.)

THE NEIGHBORHOOD CLUB.

The immediate neighborhood of our bungalow is rich in boys. In our opposite neighbors' houses there are five boys in one family of six children, and three in the other family of six, while just below us on the street there is another family of eight children, three of them being boys. I started a "Neighborhood Club" in December, wishing to become better acquainted with these boys. My plan was to have only those boys whose ages ranged from ten to fourteen in the club but eight-year-old Edmund asked if he might not be included, and at our second or third meeting, four-year-old Harold appeared in company with his four older brothers and behaved so well that the club could not turn him out. So we number nine, or ten counting myself.

There is an upper room in the bungalow where by placing two large wooden tables that were stored in the barn chamber, and

four short settees, we manage to crowd in a variety of amusements. We make scrap-books; we paint pictures of birds and animals, and have discussions on the right colors for birds' wings, squirrels' heads, and bears; we play games, and I have been pleased and flattered to find that a game I invented, and named "Climbing the Ladder," is the favorite with the boys; then we tell stories of our own experiences with birds, dogs, cats, cows, and hens.

One of my boys, the oldest, has to milk ten cows every day; a younger boy milks four, or, when his grandfather is in need of more help, he sometimes has milked six or eight. All of my boys are having the most valuable experience boys can have, the experience of work, and so are likely to grow up useful, valuable members of the community.

Dear little four-year-old Harold, when asked to think what kind and useful deed he had done during the week, said he had taken care of a little lame chicken, fed it and kept it in a safe place until it got well.

The twins are named John and James. One of them told me an interesting experience he had with a junco. He saw the junco in his yard where he feeds the birds and it did not seem to be able to fly. He approached it gently and caught it in his hand. Upon looking it over he found that a burr had got lodged under one of its wings, holding it down so that the bird could not fly. He removed the burr and the junco flew joyfully away.

Herbert and George have taken kind care of a little calf. A cow came to them that was very cross because her former owner was cruel to her and used to strike her, but under the kind treatment given her by these two brothers this cross cow is now gentle and easy to milk.

The four older brothers of little Harold feed the birds, and they had a little Christmas tree for them. They take care of the hens and are so good to them that Edmund has a special pet hen that follows him when he goes out in the yard. With willing hands they bring in the wood, help their mother about the house, and are always ready to take care of their little sister, the one girl out of this family of six.

At our last meeting Edmund went down into the sun parlor where the boys leave their coats and hats. He came back up the stairs in a hurry calling to the other boys. "Come down, quick! Don't make any noise. There's a beautiful bird here." We all hurried down the stairs and on the cedar tree close to the sun parlor, where there is always a piece of suet fastened, the male

woodpecker was feasting on the suet and kept on with his feast long enough for the boys to admire the wonderful markings on his body and wings, and the bright red bar across his head.

The sun parlor is a perpetual delight to me and it has been a pleasure to find how these boys enjoy it and notice the blossoms and admire them, and ask the names of the plants and flowers. This club, though not the first boys' club I have had, has made me realize more than ever our responsibilities with children. They are so easily influenced for good or for evil. They observe and listen and remember so much more than we think they do. If they are thoughtless, selfish, cruel, it is because they have not been taught to be different. They have not been taught to *think*. I do not believe what many people say, that all boys are naturally cruel. I believe it is the exception when a boy is cruel by nature. He has been hardened in some way and taught to be cruel. Boys are thoughtless, so are girls, so, too often, are men and women, and one of the most important lessons to teach children or to learn ourselves is to *think*, and try to think fairly, that is, to look at both sides, our own and another's. If this were done there would be far less suffering and cruelty in the world. We should think of the rights of others and of the feelings of others, and by others we should include everything that can suffer. The horses and cows do not have justice shown them, because men do not think. They do not think "these animals are of the greatest use to us; they help us to live, and we owe them good care and kind treatment."

This little bungalow club is learning to think. I ask them at each meeting to think what good they have done during the past week—to think of anything they have done to make a little more happiness in the world. Have they helped cheerfully their father or mother, or made the animals or birds happier by some kind and thoughtful deed? This is one way of teaching children to think. *Anna H. Smith, in Our Four-Footed Friends.*

NATURAL HISTORY.

INSECT ASSEMBLIES.

In warm, still days, about the hour of noon, if you sit near a bunch of white weed for fifteen minutes, you will behold high carnival among the insects. There they congregate, from the largest to the smallest, from the humble-bee to the thrips. We cannot tell how many different species may be seen, all in their best clothes and best behavior. They

never crowd, molest, or drive one another away. Perfect courtesy and equality prevail, as at a festa, as if they regarded this flower as their Saratoga, their Newport, their Utopia. In stormy weather they do not assemble, nor in bright, windy weather. The swaying of the flowers in a strong wind is very annoying to them, as it prevents their clinging to the flower and taking their dinner in a comfortable manner.

To those insects which feed upon pollen, the whiteweed furnishes a larger supply than one might at first suppose. If you look within each little yellow goblet, nearly closed at the top by five little scallops or points, you will find the anthers bursting with pollen, filling the goblet quite full.

The genial appearance of the flower wins the admiration of those insects who do not care especially for the pollen. It has a clean, fair, ample, and inviting surface; a cheerful, friendly, hospitable aspect as it stands in the free air. These qualities are evidently appreciated by its numerous visitors.—*J. A.*

HOW A SPIDER GETS OUT OF PRISON.

Much amusement and information in regard to the habits and structure of spiders can be given to one or more children by securing a stick upright in a dish of water, placing on it a spider. Allow the dish to stand in a draught of air, with some article of furniture near, upon which he can throw his web when he finds that is the only way he can escape from his prison. His antics in trying to get away from the pole—which to him is not a liberty-pole—are very funny to watch. He will stretch out one foot, and when it touches the water he will shake it as pussy does when she walks on the wet grass. After several unsuccessful attempts to effect an escape, he will scamper to the top and begin to whirl around like a spinning-wheel—as he is, inside—then throw out a line, and as soon as the air has carried it to a resting-place he will begin to try its strength—as an elephant does a bridge that crosses a stream and he fears will not bear his weight—first with one leg and then the other; if not strong enough, he goes back—not as the elephant, through the water—but to send from his body a little more material to make it secure; and when the bridge is completed he will scamper across, delighted with the liberty he has earned.—*A. L. S.*

FEET OF SPIDERS.

The feet of spiders are wonderfully adapted for walking on the web. Each foot is furnished with three claws, the middle one of which is bent over at the end, forming a long finger for clinging to the web, or for guiding the

thread in spinning. The outer claws are curved and toothed like a comb. Opposite the claws are several stiff hairs, which are toothed like the claws, and serve as a thumb for the latter to shut against.—*J. H. Emerton.*

THE EVENING PRIMROSE BY DAYLIGHT.

Can we really claim to know our evening primrose? Night after night, for weeks, its pale blooms have opened, and shed abroad sweet perfume in the darkness in every glen and by every roadside; and yet how few of us have ever stopped to witness that beautiful impatience of the swelling bud, the eager bursting of its bounds, and the magic unfolding of the crinkly yellow petals?

But it is not to the primrose of the twilight, nor the opening bud nor fresh perfumed flower, that I would now invite attention. The sunset primrose we all know,—it speaks for itself; but how few of us have the slightest interest in those faded blooms of noonday hanging like a chime of bells on the drooping stems! For twenty-four hours they may be seen hanging there, and perhaps for half that time who has guessed their pretty mystery? Go out now, in the hot, sunny noontime, and stroll among your withered primroses, and learn your lesson in humility.

Is this a mere withered useless blossom that droops upon its stem? Is it not rather the prettiest luminous fairy tent that ever sheltered a day dream? Last night, when its four green sepals burst from their cone, and sprang backward to release their bright, glossy petals, a small moth quickly caught the signal, and settled in quivering contentment, sipping at its throat. Its wings were of the prettiest rose-pink, bordered with yellow.

All through the night it fluttered among the fresh opening flowers, one of a countless host of feathery nocturnal moths and "millers." But as the sunrise has stolen upon these primroses, the fickle broods have all forgotten the flowers, and dispersed afar. "All," did I say? Oh, no; not all. Let us turn to our withered blossoms, and, one by one, look within their bells. Here is one that falls even at our approach, plainly the blossom of night before last. We will turn our attention only to last night's flowers. Here is a bell that appears to have an extra petal folded within its throat; and upon opening the folds, we disclose our faithful nursling with pink and yellow wings; the earliest twilight sipper, that even on the approach of dawn is loath to leave the flower, and creeps into the wilting bloom, where it remains concealed through the following day, and doubtless occasionally falls with it to the ground.

In the color of its markings we find an outward expression of its beautiful sympathy, the yellow margins of the wings which protrude from the flower being quite primrose-like, and the pink being reflected in the rosy hue which the wilting primrose petals so often assume, especially at the throat.

These pretty moths are by no means rare. A careful search is quite certain to disclose a number of them. I once found three upon the same plant. Look, then, to your daylight primrose.—*From "Sharp-Eyes," by William Hamilton Gibson.*

CHILDREN'S CLASSICS.

A LONG CHAPTER, AND ALL ABOUT LITTLE HARRY TWIGGS. A CHAPTER FOR A HOT DAY.

(Continued from last number.)

All at once a thought came into his mind. Suppose they did not come at all! It was a miserable thought. He climbed upon a low bough of an oak, and looked out over the whole extent of "the big field." The sun shone burning hot; there was not a single shadow upon the whole extent of yellow corn. It quite dazzled his eyes. He could see the heads and shoulders of people walking along the footpath on their way to church, for the church lay half a mile from the village, and those who liked the fields best must go that way. He saw them moving onward at little intervals above the level of the yellow corn; they were in their Sunday best, and seemed to be so happy! He jumped down from the tree and ran to the end of the footpath; for some of these people must have passed Dick Tattersall's, and could tell him if he seemed to be coming. At the end of the road he met Nelly Wardle, and her daughter, Jenny, and they lived next door to the blacksmith's.

"Did you see anything of Dick Tattersall?" asked he from them.

"Oh, yes," said Nelly; "Dick was sitting among the children, as usual, on the shady side of the house, making dandelion chains for them, poor things!"

"Then he does not mean to come!" said Harry to himself, with a great pang at his heart. He did not speak a word aloud, but walked on without looking anybody in the face lest they should see that he was crying.

At the end of the footpath was a gate, which opened into a shady lane down which Dick and his young party ought to have come.

Harry climbed on the bottom bar; and as the gate was a tall one, his chin just rested on the top bar, and there he stood, with great blinding tears in his eyes, staring up the empty

lane. Everything looked silent and solitary; and as Harry thought of all the long morning he had spent in getting things ready, and in waiting, and all the long rest of the day that he should now have to spend by himself in disappointment, he felt quite miserable and forsaken. He thought that Dick and all the children who had promised to come and see him, were sitting on the shady side of the house, making dandelion chains, as happy as could be. They had forgotten him; they had forgotten their promise; they cared for nothing but amusing themselves! He shut his eyes to keep back the tears for a while, and then, fairly overcome, slipped down from the gate, threw himself on the grass, and cried bitterly.

If he had not been crying, and if he had not been so miserable, and if he had only stayed a little longer looking over the gate, he would soon have seen a very pleasant sight! He would have seen Dick Tattersall carrying the sturdy little Joshua on his back, and Nancy with a sheaf of timothy-grass in one hand, on every bent of which were at least four-and-twenty wild strawberries like great coral beads, and in the other, a little basket as full as it ever would hold, and covered with a cloth; and Peggy Ford, with something in her hand, that looked very like a big basin tied up in a buff handkerchief. And down the lane they were trudging as fast as they could come, chattering as they came along.

Poor Harry, who lay crying in the grass, heard something just before they reached the gate, which made him jump up all at once, and rush forward. He heard their voices, and there they were, all four of them! They saw that he had been crying and he did not pretend to deny it, for he said he thought that they would not come; he thought they would stay at home and make dandelion chains instead.

"Not come!" Dick exclaimed. "Why, he had been out ever so early that morning to get strawberries out of Smith's spinny! and they would have been there two hours earlier, only Mrs. Ford's cat was lost, and they had to find her. She had been shut out all night, and Mrs. Ford was quite miserable till she was found, and they all went to hunt her." Then Peggy had such a deal to tell about their trouble on her account; and Harry had to tell how he had seen her at the door, and little Joshua had to tell that he it was that saw her first, and nobody would believe it was her; and she was in Martin's old pig-sty and nobody could tell how she got there. Then Nancy wanted Harry to look at the strawberries all strung on the tall timothy-grass; and then they had to tell that they were doing this, and not making dandelion chains,

when Mrs. Wardle saw them, and there was such a clatter of merry voices all talking together as never was heard before.

Harry gave little Joshua the clapper and he strutted on clapping with all his might, and the others ran down to the little parlor among the hazel bushes and there they examined what they all had for dinner. They all thought it as good as a Lord Mayor's feast!

The visitors said that Harry had made a beautiful little parlor for them and they admired the seats and the moss cushions and everything. Harry felt very happy, and so did they all; and as they were very hungry they agreed to eat Peggy Ford's rice pudding now by way of luncheon. Little Joshua did nothing all the morning but strut about and clap, and not a single bird came near the corn.

Of course, they supposed that old Farmer Broadbent was gone to church, but instead of that he was walking down to his big corn-field, and reached the other side of the old marl-pit just as they had finished eating the cold pudding. They did not see him, because he stood behind the hazel bushes, but *he saw them*; and presently, crash! he came through the hedge just below, and stood before them, with his face all red with heat and with his hat in one hand, and his stick and a great red pocket-handkerchief with which he was going to wipe his face, in the other. He was dressed in his Sunday clothes; his brown coat, yellow and black and white striped waistcoat, which was all unbuttoned, and drab kerseymer breeches and gray stockings, for to-day he was without his gaiters because it was so hot. He was dressed just as he was when he sat as overseer of the poor; and Harry was quite frightened, for his face looked very red, and when he lifted up his red pocket-handkerchief to wipe his face, he lifted also his great stick, because, as we said, he held them both in the same hand.

"You children seem to be very 'merry thear!' said he. "You've gotten a famous feast, and a nice shady corner to eat it in! But you would na be worse for a nice bottle o' my best fizzing beer; so if one on you will go wi' me, I'll gie you one!"

"Thank you, sir," said Dick, jumping up at once to go with him.

"Thank ye, mister!" said Harry, surprised, and looking as pleased as Punch.

"And the little one does a' th' work to-day, I reckon!" said the farmer, smiling at little Joshua, who was making noise enough to deafen anybody.

Dick went with the farmer for the bottle of "fizzing beer," and he heard him laughing in the best kitchen, where Mrs. Broadbent,

who had just come in from church, was sitting, and he told her all about "a parcel o' children that were having a feast wi' little Harry Twiggs, all among the hazzle bushes," and how he had promised them a bottle of "fizzing beer"; and then Mrs. Broadbent was heard laughing too, and she said that one of "those gooseberry pies" would not come in amiss among them; and then out she came with a great gooseberry pie, baked in a brown dish with all sorts of zigzags on the crust, and a bottle in her hand; and Mr. Broadbent came after her, and neither of them could help laughing still, and he said and so did she, that they hoped the pie would be to their liking, and the beer too; only one thing they must remember, not to break either bottle or dish, for if they did, they should both of them make a pretty row!

Away went Dick as fast as he could with the great pie in the brown dish, and the bottle of "fizzing beer." Now, only think what a surprise to everybody! Nancy, when she saw the pie, exclaimed, "My goodness!" and Peggy, "Oh, my!" Little Joshua's eyes opened twice as wide as common, and he clapped louder than ever, while Harry capered about like a wild Indian, singing with all his might,—

"O my!

Here's a gooseberry pie
With a zigzag crust for dinner."

When they had set out their dinner, they sat down to it; and, would anybody believe it? there they sat eating their dinner among those pleasant shady "hazzle bushes," as old farmer Broadbent called them, from half-past twelve o'clock till a quarter to three, when the bells began ringing for afternoon service.

There never was such a dinner as that! and all the time it lasted, little Joshua kept strutting about clapping as loud as he could, so that the birds heard him all over the big field; and so did Farmer Broadbent as he sat under the sycamore tree, before his kitchen door, smoking his pipe after dinner.

About an hour after this, up rose the farmer from the bench under the tree where he had been having a comfortable nap after his pipe, and smiled to himself as he thought of the children in the cornfield. And what did he do then? Why, without saying a word to anybody, he walked down to see what they were after, saying all the time to himself, what a foolish old fellow he was to find so much amusement in "a parcel o' poor children"! And though he knew it was not right to be a listener, yet he went and stood close behind the hazel bushes again, just on

purpose to hear what they were talking about; and if the children had not been so much taken up with their own talk, they must have heard him laughing to himself.

They had drunk all the "fizzing beer," every drop of it; and now Dick Tattersall was lying on his back, among the grass and flowers before the little wood-parlor door, and kicking up his legs, and thumping down his heels again in a very ecstasy of delight, and all the time his tongue was rattling away like a mill-clapper. The afternoon service was just over, and Dick was pretending that he could see all the folks come out, and was talking for them; now very solemnly, for the clergyman; now very pompously, for the schoolmaster; and now very savagely, for the constable, who was so hard and pitiless to the poor, and whom everybody disliked so much. And then he told them a long story of how, the very Sunday after the constable had seized on poor Nelly Wardle's bed for rent, *he* stuck a pin into a long stick, and sat in the pew behind the constable, and poked the stick through the bottom of the broken pew, and pricked the great calves of his legs. The constable fancied it was horse-flies that were biting him so keenly, and kept slapping his calves, till they could hear him half over the church; and then the pin pricked him again, and then he slapped; and then another prick, and another great slap, till at last up he jumped in a great rage and went out. When church was over, he gave the clerk a great scolding for not opening the church doors and windows on week-days, so that the flies might not be so famished on Sundays, till they were ready to eat folks' flesh off their bones! That was what Dick was saying, while Farmer Broadbent was listening.

How the children laughed! and Dick kicked up his legs, and banged them down again, just as if it were a great steam-engine at work. The farmer behind the bushes laughed quite as much as they did; and then he walked away, thinking how pleased he was that poor little Harry Twiggs had such a merry company, and feeling sorry only for one thing, and that was, that he could not give Dick Tattersall sixpence for pricking the constable who had so sorely distressed the poor widow, without betraying himself as a listener. That was the only thing that troubled him; nothing at all troubled the children, and they were as merry as fairies.

"And there they are at this moment," said Herbert and Meggy's father, "and are you not as much pleased as the farmer, that they have had a merry day of it, and such a good dinner?"

"What a long day to-morrow will seem to poor little Harry, all by himself!" said Meggy.

"Not at all so!" returned her father. "Harry will do nothing all day but think of the fun he had the day before; one day like that would last him a week. And, besides that, they promised to come and see him again next Sunday,—the farmer heard them; and so he told his wife, hardly an hour ago, as they were sitting in the arbor at tea, and she said in a minute that she would take care that they should have another gooseberry pie, and another bottle of 'fizzing beer' to make merry with; and Mrs. Broad-bent is a woman that always keeps her word; only she made her husband promise that he would say nothing to the children about it beforehand."

Meggy and Herbert were delighted; they clapped their hands for joy, and forgot all about the excessive heat that had made them so uncomfortable before.—From *"The Children's Year,"* by Mary Howitt.

(Concluded.)

LITTLE BARBARA'S SONG.

A mother stood by the spinning-wheel,
Winding the yarn on an ancient reel;
As she counted the threads in the twilight dim
She murmured the words of a quaint old hymn:

"Whether we sleep or whether we wake,
We are His who gave His Life for our sake."

Little Barbara watched the spinning-wheel
And, keeping time with her toe and heel,
To the hum of the wheel and her mother's song,

To which she listened the hour long:
"Whether we sleep or whether we wake,
We are His who gave His Life for our sake."

That night, in her sleep as she dreaming lay,
Over and over the scenes of the day
Came back till she seemed to hear again
The hum of the thread and the quaint old strain:

"Whether we sleep or whether we wake,
We are His who gave His Life for our sake."

Next morning, with bounding heart and feet,
Little Barbara walked in the crowded street,

And up to her lips, as she passed along,
Rose the tender words of her mother's song:

"Whether we sleep or whether we wake,
We are His who gave His Life for our sake."

A wanderer sat on a wayside stone,
Weary and sighing, sick and alone,
But he raised his head with a look of cheer
As the gentle tones fell on his ear:
"Whether we sleep or whether we wake,
We are His who gave His Life for our sake."

Toiling all day in a crowded room,
A mother stood at the noisy loom,
A voice came up through the ceaseless din,
These words at the window floated in:
"Whether we sleep or whether we wake,
We are His who gave His Life for our sake."

A sufferer lay on his bed of pain,
With a burning brow and a throbbing brain,
The notes of the child was heard once more,
As she chanted low at the open door:
"Whether we sleep or whether we wake,
We are His who gave His Life for our sake."

Once again as the day passed by,
And the shade of the evening-time drew nigh,
Like the voice of a friend or the carol of birds
Came back to his thoughts those welcome words:
"Whether we sleep or whether we wake,
We are His who gave His Life for our sake."

Alike in all hearts as the years wore on,
The infant's voice rose up anon,
In the grateful words that cheered their way,
Of the hymn that little Barbara sang that day:

"Whether we sleep or whether we wake,
We are His who gave His Life for our sake."

Perhaps when the labor of life's work is done,
And they lay down their burdens one by one,

Forgetting forever those days of pain,
They will take up forever the sweet refrain:
"Whether we sleep or whether we wake,
We are His who gave His Life for our sake."

A woman sat by her loved one's bier;
The sun seemed darkened, the world seemed drear;

But her sobs were stilled and her eye grew dry

As she listened to Barbara's passing by:
"Whether we sleep or whether we wake,
We are His who gave His Life for our sake."

(By Request.)

It is not perhaps widely known, since it is a somewhat later development, that wood-peckers are making discoveries to better their conditions. The redhead is cultivating the habit of a fly-catcher, and has become expert in securing his food from the air, although he is plainly built for the more difficult labor of digging it out of a tree trunk.

THE HOUSE ON THE SHORE OF
ETERNITY.

AN ALLEGORY.

Two simple-minded men who had dwelt all their lives in a country far inland, at last undertook a long journey together. This happened many ages ago, when there were no such things as printed books or village schools, and when the people in isolated districts saw no travellers, and knew nothing of the great world beyond the hills which closed their horizon.

Wolfgang and Athelstane,—so our pilgrims were called,—walked on over downs and heaths, and through the vast forests of oak which then overspread the land, till at last, after a night's toilsome march, they came, in the early dawn, to a spot which seemed to them the strangest they had ever visited. Walls of rock shut out any distant view, but immediately before them on a gentle declivity there stood a structure, much larger than the humble cottages which Wolfgang and Athelstane had inhabited, and of a singularly different form. Instead of a pointed roof of thatch or tiles, there was, on the top, a flat floor of boards; while beneath, where there should have been a solid, square foundation, there was a long thin wedge, almost like a roof which had been reversed and turned downwards. Also, through the floor, rose up two long slender tree-like erections, with all the branches carefully smoothed away. Crossbars were slung on these poles, and ropes connected them together, while a great roll of coarse woven stuff, like sackcloth, lay folded up beside them. At one end, and outside of the wooden structure, hung a huge beam, standing, as it seemed, in some unaccountable relation to the rest of the fabric, and connected with it by machinery passing into the interior. All these singular things were slowly and carefully noted by our two humble travellers as they walked round the wooden building in the morning twilight. No one was near who could afford them an explanation of the use or purpose of what they saw; and their doubts and wonder grew every moment.

"What can it mean?" said Wolfgang. "What did the builder,—whoever he can have been,—intend by such a mansion as this?"

"It is clear enough," answered Athelstane thoughtfully, "that it is the work of some very ingenious hands. How soundly and skilfully it is all fitted together!"

"True," replied his comrade; "and yet ought we to say it is well made before we can tell for what purpose it is constructed? To me it seems that our own old huts of wattled

willow and turf were, after all, of a better shape for a house to stand on the ground."

"Do you think this is a House, *only* a House?" said Athelstane, suddenly looking up.

"Well, if it be not a house, what else can it be?" said Wolfgang. "Let us try and look inside of it and examine it more closely."

The two men soon contrived to enter the edifice which so puzzled them; and presently Wolfgang exclaimed triumphantly:

"See! there can be no question more on the matter. This is only a house. Here are seats and tables for men to sit at, and beds for them to sleep in; and here is a fire-place and a great iron pot to cook food. Now you can have no hesitation. It is just a wooden house, and rather stupidly planned."

"I have no doubt," said Athelstane, "that it is intended for a habitation; but is it not inexplicable that a builder who can work so cleverly should construct it so unsuitably for a common house? Why is it not made to stand squarely and steadily on the ground? What is the sense of these long soaring poles standing up through the middle, with the coils of ropes and bales of sacking? And this? This is the most mysterious thing of all," said Athelstane, placing his hand on a wheel which instantly stirred the great beam at the back.

"They are strange certainly," replied Wolfgang; "very strange and useless things, I should say, about a house which would be much more comfortable and answer its purpose better without them. I cannot agree with you that the builder was really a clever man, or knew what he was about, else he would never have erected those poles or made that senseless, upside-down roof, instead of a foundation; or, above all, have constructed, that totally unmeaning apparatus behind the whole structure."

"I differ from you," said Athelstane, after some moments more of reflection. "I think it is we who are not clever or ingenious, and who cannot find out what the carpenter who made this building intends to do with it. I do not believe that singular form beneath (so little fit for a building only intended for a house), nor those poles and ropes and vast sheets of woven stuff—nor yet that mysterious great beam—were all added to a mere house for nothing—for no purpose whatever. I think, Wolfgang,"—and Athelstane laid his hand on his friend's arm earnestly,—"*I think what we are looking at is something more than a house. I think it is not intended to stand always where we see it.*"

"You are dreaming, Athelstane," said Wolfgang, with a short laugh. "Where on earth should a house go if it is not to stand

always where it is built? Who would want to move such a structure as this?"

"I do not know," said Athelstane, humbly. "I do not profess to understand the mystery of it; only I see that the Master Carpenter who built it must have been a very great carpenter indeed; and I cannot believe that he has made all these things in vain, or for no important purpose. If he wanted only a house, why did he not simply build a house, standing flat on the ground, and with no shafts piercing the air, and no vast guiding beam at the back? Trust me, friend Wolfgang, this is something more than the common abode of which alone you seem able to think."

While the two simple-minded men yet talked together the sun had risen, and there was a sound of many waters and of rising waves, and through an opening in the rocks, which the travellers had not perceived in the twilight, the great ocean became revealed to their eyes. Higher and higher rose the tide till it almost reached where the strange wooden building still lay motionless; and the travellers retreated a little up the shore, and stood, awestruck and breathless, watching what might happen. Then down from the cliff above ran a band of mariners, and leaped on board the vessel, and hauled in the anchor, and presently the waves lifted up the ship, and she floated bravely on the waters. Very soon the mariners set the sails, which had lain idly on the deck, the pilot placed his hand on the rudder, and guided the noble barque, and she was borne by the winds of heaven, far off beyond the uttermost ken of the two poor travellers upon the shore.

Then, after a time, Wolfgang turned to his companion, and said, "Athelstane, you spoke truth. Yon House-of-the-Sea was made, as you foresaw, for other use than to stand upon the ground. It was planned for a different element—the free world of waters—and now we see what was the purport of so many things which before seemed to us useless—the Keel, the Masts, the Sails, the marvellous and mysterious Rudder. How wonderful it is! How wise and far-seeing the great Carpenter who made the ship!"

As Wolfgang spoke, Athelstane lifted his head, which had drooped in heavy thought, and he saw the wide ocean leaping in the morning light stretched out before him, and the new-risen sun smote his face with glory. And Athelstane laid his hand on Wolfgang's arm, and spoke as his friend had never heard him speak before, for it was as a man in whose soul a great new thought had sprung to life:—"Aye, Wolfgang, aye," he said; "but if that marvellous work of human hands was not

made only for earth, do you think *we* were made for nothing better than the life which now we lead—to eat and drink, and marry, and toil, and sleep, and die, and be forgotten? Are not *we* too, O Wolfgang, made for other things than these? Are we not fitted for some other element than that in which now we have our being?—some other existence than that which yet we lead? If we were intended only to live our few years of animal life on earth and then perish, why were we given minds to plough the seas of thought, and aspirations to point to heaven, and love to swell beneath the breath of affection, and conscience to guide us on our way as the pilot lays on it his mighty hand? O Wolfgang! we could perceive that the ship was intended to float on the great Ocean which we had never beheld. Can we not see that we and all our race are made to live in a world yet unseen—wider, freer, grander a thousand times than earth—a world which we shall enter whensoever the tide of Death shall lift us up, and bear us away?"

—By Frances Power Cobbe.

Leisure will always be found by persons who know how to employ their time; those who want time are the people who do nothing.

—Madame Roland.

Remember too on every occasion which leads thee to vexation to apply this principle: not that this is a misfortune, but that to bear it nobly is good fortune.—*M. Aurelius Antoninus*.

God is known and seen and trusted by thousands of souls who need no other evidence of his being or his will than what is directly revealed to their hearts. There is that within us more sacred than cathedral altar or stained window or sacred writing. It is the soul itself.—*H. W. Bellows*.

To labor for a perfect redemption from the spirit of oppression is the great business of the whole family of Jesus Christ in this world.

There is a principle which is pure placed in the human mind which, in different places and ages, hath had different names; it is, however, pure and proceeds from God. It is deep and inward, confined to no forms of religion, nor excluded from any when the heart stands in perfect sincerity. For whomsoever this takes root and grows they become brethren.—*John Woolman*.

THE AMUSEMENT COLUMN.

I.

KING'S MOVE PUZZLE.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
R	H	E	E	C	N	D	N
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
S	E	R	A	J	E	E	E
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
G	O	M	O	N	E	P	D
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32
I	R	H	N	D	C	N	F
33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40
N	L	A	H	C	L	I	O
41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48
K	N	A	N	O	K	A	N
49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56
N	R	M	J	B	C	R	O
57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64
F	I	A	N	E	A	T	I

Begin at a certain square and move to an adjoining square (as in the king's move in chess), until each square has been entered once. When the moves have been rightly made, the name of a famous paper signed in July and also the names of three of its signers may be spelled out. The path from one letter to another is continuous.

II.

ADD O.

1. Change a human being into a sound of misery.
2. Change a cooking stove into a fruit.
3. A feather into an idea.
4. A night creature into something which floats.
5. Change a boy into a burden.
6. A bed into a water-bird.
7. A fabulous Grecian woman into a small animal.
8. A bad habit into means of speech.

—B. F. B., in *The Beacon*.

III.

CHARADE.

My first lies upon the floor.
My second is a kind of grain.
My third is what we all want.
My whole is one of the United States.

IV.

MIXED WORD SQUARE.

TERRESOTTNAHRENSENASETER

Rearrange the above twenty-five letters into five words that will form a word square.

V.

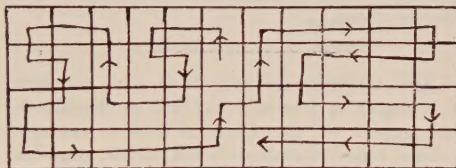
INITIAL LETTER PUZZLE.

In the eleven sentences below appear as many words (one in each sentence) which, if found and written one below the other, will spell the name of a person born in August.

1. War is wrong.
2. The air was full of smoke.
3. The cabin was made of logs.
4. Tea will be served at once.
5. The east wind is welcome in hot weather.
6. The rain was very heavy during the night.
7. The store was destroyed by fire.
8. The cottage is to let.
9. The oil is very poor.
10. "We are tenting to-night on the old camp-ground."
11. "Did you think cocoa was made from cocoanuts?"

Answers to Puzzles in the June Number.

I. LABYRINTH OF LETTERS:



Ben Jonson.

Harriet Beecher Stowe.

Harriet Martineau.

II. HALF-SQUARE: THAT
HAT
AT
T

III. CONUNDRUMS: 1. Because such a thing had never entered his head before. 2. He married his wives first and axed them afterwards. 3. U, because it is always in fun,

IV. CHANGED INITIALS: Lace, race, dace, face, mace, pace.

V. ZIGZAG: HEAD
NAPE
DARN
BEAR
IBIS
BEVY
TENT
EMIT
GUAM
REAR
VOTE
DINT
NEAT
LEAP
LEAD
BEAU

Harriet Martineau.

THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE.

OBJECTS.

1. To cheer and comfort the lonely and discouraged—not only invalids, but all who need cheer and comfort—by the interchange of letters and by gifts of books and periodicals.

2. To supply in some measure to young people in remote places the lack of schools, by gifts of school-books, letters, and, for those who desire it, correspondence classes on history, the natural sciences, and other interesting branches of study. If any desire to join such classes, they may send their names to our secretary.

3. Also to supply, to some extent, the lack of a church. One good sermon or sermon extract is printed in each number of the paper. These sermons are never doctrinal, but practical, and intended to cheer and comfort the sorrowful and aid in giving a vital religion without regard to sect or creed.

Any minister (of any sect) who receives this paper is cordially invited to distribute the copies of the *Cheerful Letter* received among lonely members of his parish, shut-ins or invalids of whom he may know. He is also invited to write to our headquarters (see address on this page) and give names and addresses of those who may be cheered and helped by becoming our correspondents.

No *theology* is disseminated in our paper. All the religious matter is intended merely to strengthen, cheer, and comfort those in need of such practical help.

Givers of books are reminded that only books of instructive or wholesome nature should be offered in the Book Club. Classics, educational works, and standard novels are always acceptable.

The address of Mrs. Emma M. Backus is now 633 Third Street, North, St. Petersburg, Florida.

LIBRARY NOTICE.

The Cheerful Letter Exchange offers to start a circulating library in any small community needing one, providing proper location and care can be furnished and satisfactory references supplied.

Apply to Miss Helen L. Wells, 269 Franklin Street, Newton, Mass.

IMPORTANT NOTICES.

The regular monthly meeting of the Cheerful Letter Exchange will be omitted during the summer.

The work has grown so it is no longer easy for the Book Club Secretary to care for all that pertains to the Club. The following ladies have volunteered to take charge of the different interests:—

FOR MUSIC, FOR REQUESTS OR OFFERS, TO MRS. THOMAS LACEY, 145 GRAND VIEW AVENUE, WOLLASTON, MASS.

OFFERS OF BIBLES—ALSO OF PATCHWORK PIECES—ARE CANCELLED FOR THE SUMMER.

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THE ATTENTION OF ALL READERS OF "THE CHEERFUL LETTER" IS CALLED TO THE FOLLOWING NOTICE:—

It is a rule of the Cheerful Letter Exchange that no one may ask for money, clothing, or other articles, except books and magazines.

The name of any person who fails to obey this rule will be dropped from our list. Any worker receiving such a request should send the letter at once to headquarters.

In sending subscriptions for the *Cheerful Letter*, address The Cheerful Letter Exchange, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass. Subscriptions, 50 cents a year.

Editor of "The Cheerful Letter," Miss L. Freeman Clarke.

Book Club Secretary, Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 25 Fairmount Way, Quincy, Mass.